

SHTMIZU et al., S.N. 09/406,570
Page 10

Dkt. 2271/57219-A

REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the final Office Action dated November 5, 2004. Claims 1-5 and 7-19 were pending in this application. Claim 6 was previously canceled. By this Amendment, claim 19 has been canceled, without disclaimer or prejudice, and independent claims 1, 8, 13 and 18 have been amended by adding the features described in now-canceled claim 19. It is submitted that no new issues and no new matter have been introduced by the present amendment. Claims 1-5 and 7-18 are pending in this application, with claims 1, 8, 13 and 18 being in independent form.

Claims 1, 7, 8, 13 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) or § 102(e) as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,638,354 to Nakayama et al., or under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly obvious over Nakayama in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,666,345 to Takahashi et al. or Japanese patent application publication number 11-066630 ("the '630 reference"), Claims 2, 3, 9-11 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Nakayama in view of U.S. Patent 5,477,527 to Tsuchiya et al. Claims 2-5, 9-12 and 14-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Nakayama in view of U.S. Patent 5,673,250 to Mieda et al. or U.S. Patent 5,459,712 to Sugaya et al. Claims 1, 8, 13 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over the '630 reference. Claims 2-5, 9-12 and 14-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over the '630 reference in view of Mieda et al. or Sugaya et al.

The Office Action indicates that claim 19 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable over the cited art, if the claim is rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By this Amendment, and independent claims 1, 8, 13 and 18 have been amended by

SHIMIZU et al., S.N. 09/406,570
Page 11

Dkt. 2271/57219-A

adding the features described in claim 19, and claim 19 which depended from claim 1 has been canceled.

Since independent claims 1, 8, 13 and 18 as amended now recite the features formerly described in now-canceled claim 19, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 8, 13 and 18, and the claims depending therefrom, are allowable over the cited art for at least the very same reasons that claim 19 would have been allowable if it had been converted into independent form.

If a petition for a further extension of time is required to make this amendment timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition. The Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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